THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

IMMIGRATION REFORM:

WHAT'S NEXT FOR CITIES AND METROS

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Welcome:

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The Brookings Institution

Opening Keynote:

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Moderator:

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Panelists:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. LIU: Good morning. Welcome to Brookings. And we really appreciate you joining us this morning for a discussion immigration reform and its implications for cities and metropolitan areas.

I want to start by talking about -- to set the conversation today, and why we're focusing on cities and metropolitan areas, in particular, as we focus on this really important topic.

Now, our program, the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, recently released a book co-authored by Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley, called *The Metropolitan Revolution* -- with an ambitious subtitle title: *How Cities and Metros Are Fixing our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy*.

The basic of the premise of the book is this: At a time when Washington is paralyzed in gridlock, leaders in cities and metropolitan areas across the country are stepping up with innovative, often bipartisan solutions to some of the super-sized challenges of our time, such as reviving the manufacturing sector in Northeast Ohio -- one firm and industry partnership, university partnership, at a time -- building a world-class regional transit system in Denver with primarily local funds, or proactively boosting exports in trade at the point of production, such as we're seeing in Portland, Oregon.

Today's forum is about local leadership in another super-sized issue, which is managing the flow and integration of immigrants.

Now, this morning, we will hear how leaders in regions as diverse as Los Angeles and Silicon Valley, Salt Lake City, and New York, are moving forward to advance opportunities for immigrant families, workers and employers in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform.

Now, to be sure, regional leaders must lead, you know, because they know the unique needs and assets of their economies best. But they cannot go it alone.

A strong federal partner, a transparent, predictable set of national rules and policies goes a long way to enabling on-the-ground social and economic success.

So, in that spirit, our panel today, led by our senior fellow Audrey Singer, will remind us why comprehensive immigration reform matters to strengthening regional economies and regional opportunities. Yet, I also hope you will learn that if Washington cannot make inroads on immigration reform, then there remains a silver lining, which is that progress is still possible because of the hard working and creative collaborations of local and regional leaders.

Now, to start us off this morning, we have the good fortune of hearing from one key federal partner, and that is Cecilia Muñoz, the director of the White House Domestic Policy Council.

Now, Cecilia has long been a champion for immigrants' rights, both prior to joining the administration, when she was senior vice president for the National Council of La Raza, and now, where she has been working tirelessly, within the administration and with members of Congress, to get both programmatic and legislative reform done. And as a testament to her commitment to civil rights, Cecilia received the MacArthur Genius Award in 2000.

I also wanted to note, though, that Cecilia was born and raised in Detroit, and her father worked as an engineer at the Ford Motor Company. And, in fact, we have joining us this morning Congressman Kildee who is from the Flint area. Time permitting, I think it would be really interesting if she can also give us a window into whether or not there is a short-term role for the federal government to help Detroit get out of its fiscal crisis and emerge as a mighty center of innovation and production.

But, in the meantime, let's focus on the topic of today. So, please join me in welcoming Cecilia Muñoz. (Applause)

MS. MUÑOZ: Thanks very much, Amy, for that introduction, and to you for having me here. I am a big, big fan of what Brookings does on metropolitan policy and urban policy, and this is an incredibly important forum. So I just appreciate so much being part of it.

As you've heard, I've worked on immigration policy, in our nation's capital and around the country, for over 25 years. And, while this issue is discussed and pretty much decided upon in Washington, the impacts of these discussions and decisions are felt in cities and towns all across the county, and it's really cities and towns that are the innovators in dealing with the implications of immigration, and in helping immigrants become fully integrated into American life.

As you heard, I know this from personal experience. I'm from Detroit. I'm the daughter of immigrants from Bolivia, and I grew up surrounded by communities populated with immigrants from around the world in search of the American Dream. My neighbors on the block where I grew up, and where my dad still lives, were from the Ukraine, from Finland -- really, from all over. This was very much part of the Detroit story, just as it's part of the American story.

And I started my career providing services to immigrants at NGOs in California and Chicago, and building coalitions that worked on issues of integration -- because the integration of immigrants happens in local communities.

When I started at the White House, before I became director of the Domestic Policy Council, I was the director of Intergovernmental Affairs, which means that I managed the White House's relationships with governors, mayors, all across the country. And in that role, I worked really closely with local leaders as they struggled to recover from the historic recession. Many of them, from both political parties, understood

-- and understand -- the integral role that immigrants play in helping their cities innovate, grow the local economy, and get through difficult economic times.

And I can tell you that President Obama understands this, as well. As a U.S. Senator, and before that, as a state senator from Illinois, the president developed a view that immigration reform is not just the right thing to do, it's an economic imperative that impacts all sorts of communities and families in very tangible ways.

Two weeks ago, the White House released a report highlighting the economic benefits of the bipartisan immigration reform bill that passed the Senate in June, and the significant costs to our country and our economy if Congress fails to act. The report makes clear how high the stakes are in that debate. So let me just give you a few of the highlights.

If Congress acts, we'll see a larger labor force, higher productivity, more investments. Over the next two decades our economy will grow by an additional 5.4 percent compared to the status quo.

If Congress acts, real wages will rise, deficits will fall by $850 billion, and our debt will shrink as a share of the economy.

If Congress acts, the solvency of the Social Security trust fund will be extended by two years, and the 75-year shortfall will be reduced by nearly half a trillion dollars.

If Congress acts, the recovery of the housing market will be strengthened, thanks to stronger demand and higher prices for homes in neighborhoods hardest hit by the recession.

If Congress acts, things like the visa waiver program, new officers in the Customs and Border Patrol, and the permanent authorization of the Corporation for

Travel Promotion, will provide a significant boost o tourism and hospitality all around the country.

So, yes, comprehensive immigration reform is a moral imperative, it's a security imperative, and it's about fairness. But on top of all of that, the economic costs of inaction are simply too high to delay.

And since the focus of the discussion today is the impact of this debate on cities and metro areas, I should add that if Congress acts, we can finally address the challenges that cities have been facing as they grapple with the symptoms of our broken immigration system. Because the crux of the matter is that, while Congress and the federal government have the authority to set immigration law and enforce it, local governments live with the results of what Congress does and what Congress fails to do.

And because Congress has failed to address the broken immigration system for years, local governments wrestle with the challenges of large numbers of undocumented immigrants living and working in their communities. States and municipalities have faced these challenges in a variety of ways. From Arizona and Alabama's adoption of harsh laws that attempt to engage local law enforcement officials in immigration enforcement -- which is a federal function -- to states that have passed in-state tuition laws so that undocumented students have better access to college.

Local police forces wrestle with the challenge of building relationships in communities which are, by definition, living in fear of contact with the authorities, which makes it harder to encourage folks to come forward when a crime has been committed or a safety hazard emerges.

School districts work to integrate children who struggle with the fear that their parents will be deported. Research is showing, as you might expect, that that kind of anxiety interferes with success in school for those students.

And while some state legislatures have responded to these challenges by passing laws with reflect a variety of approaches, the fact is that states can't regulate immigration. That's the job of the United States Congress. And even if they could, we could hardly say that a patchwork of 50 different approaches is a rational immigration policy.

We know that there is innovation happening in states and in local governments, especially on the issues of immigrant integration. And I know you're going to hear more about that today. But it is important that Congress act. It is their job to regulate immigration. And in the framework of rational policy, we can be giving States and local governments the supports that they need to do this job well -- the job of integrating us into one community successfully.

So, to describe the current state of play a little bit, I should start by saying that I am hopeful that June 27th, 2013, is a day that will go down in history. I was fortunate enough to be sitting in the gallery as the Senate passed a Border Security Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act -- the bipartisan bill we've all been talking about for so long. That vote was the result of countless hours put in by an extremely dedicated bipartisan group of Senators, their staffs, and administration staff providing technical support all along the way.

Nobody got everything they wanted -- including the White House. But the final bill reflected President Obama's principles for common-sense immigration reform. It was consistent with our history as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. And when the time came to vote on that bill, the Senate passed it with an overwhelming bipartisan majority -- 68 to 32. Just to put that in perspective, in last November's election, only two places, Utah and D.C., gave either candidate 68 percent of the vote.

The reason this bill got so many votes is simple: It's a smart compromise, and it's pretty good policy. It creates a fair pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants living and working in our communities -- a pathway that will require them to pass background checks, learn English, pay taxes and penalties and go to the end of the line behind legal immigrants who have been caught in the limbo of immigration backlogs.

The bill will create a new path to citizenship for agricultural workers who contribute to agricultural industry and put food on our tables. These are immigrants who play an integral role in the future of food security, and it's time we gave them a pathway to citizenship.

The bill creates an expedited path for young immigrants, known as "Dreamers," who were brought to the U.S. as children, attended school, know this as their country, yet have lived in constant fear of deportation.

The bill also represents the best chance that our country has had in decades to modernize our legal immigration system. It builds on the administration's progress of strengthening border security and cracking down on employers that hire and exploit undocumented workers. It also creates a meaningful pathway to earn citizenship for undocumented immigrants, modernizes the legal immigration system for families, workers, and employees.

So, we know the fight for immigration reform has never been easy. We don't expect it to be easy this time. There were plenty of people who predicted that we would never get this far, and there are folks predicting that we won't get any further.

But there's little question in my mind that the Senate bill, or something very much like it, would pass if the House got a chance to vote on it. But as the president said when the bill left the Senate, now is the time when opponents will try their hardest to

pull this bipartisan effort apart so they can stop common-sense immigration reform from becoming a reality. So we've got work to do.

But I believe that even in today's Washington, the coalition calling for action is too broad, too deep, and too forceful to ignore. If we keep our sense of urgency and our sense of purpose, I believe Congress will listen to a clear majority of Americans. They'll listen to the business community and the labor movement, the Chamber of Commerce and the SEIU. They'll listen to leaders from across the spectrum -- faith communities, law enforcement, the civil rights movement, and, importantly, state and local governments, all of whom are calling for a common-sense immigration reform along the lines of what the Senate passed.

They'll listen to leading voices in both parties. Just the other day, David Plouffe, the architect of the Obama presidential campaign, and Steve Schmidt, senior advisor to the 2008 McCain campaign, wrote a joint op-ed with a less-than-vague title, "Pass the Immigration Bill."

So let me leave you with this -- we are engaging the clear majority of Americans who support reform, and telling them that now is not the time to let up. It's the time to speak up. It's the time to make sure that everyone -- not just in this city but around the country -- knows what's at stake, to make it clear to families from all backgrounds and all parts of the country why this matters to them.

I came to this work because families like mine are still working hard for their piece of the American Dream. We've done so much as a country to put that dream within reach. And we have come too far to quit now, for immigrant families and communities all over the country who are dealing with the effects of our broken immigration system.

I won't quit. I know President Obama won't quit. And with the hard work of an unprecedentedly broad coalition and voices from around the country, we can get this done.

So, I thank you for your contribution in shining a spotlight on what's going on in municipal governments and cities and towns all around the country. And I look forward to that effort informing our work and getting to the place where the President is signing that bill into law.

Thank you all very much. (Applause)

MS. SINGER: Thank you so much, Cecilia, for being with us this morning. Cecilia's been working on immigration issues for most of her professional career, and we are lucky to have someone as competent and compassion as she working in the White House.

Good morning, and welcome, everybody. I'm Audrey Singer. I'm a senior fellow in the Metropolitan Policy Program, and I'll be moderating our discussion today. We have three awesome panelists, and we're going to talk today about what immigration reform means for metropolitan areas and for cities and suburbs.

I want to ask the panelists to come up and get mic-ed. And while that's happening, I will say a few words from here, and make an awkward move to the seat and get mic-ed myself, continue talking, and then we'll start the discussion.

As you've just heard, there are many good reasons for immigration reform, and many facets make up a comprehensive set of measures to make our immigration system work better and strengthen the U.S. economy. The immigration debate is very much alive in Congress as they continue to discuss how to change the laws around a number of dimensions -- many were just mentioned -- border security,

legalization, a work-site verification system, temporary worker programs for immigrants in different industries and policies around the admission of legal permanent residents.

We don't know yet what the outcome of the current effort will be. We don't know whether we'll see a law that resembles the package of immigration policies that was passed in the Senate about a month ago, or whether Congress will take a different approach, such as introducing a number of discrete bills like those being discussed in the House presently. Or will Congress not be able to come to agreement, and will we stick with the status quo? And what are the consequences of doing that? Those are the things that we will be discussing.

We do know several things: The U.S. immigration policy has not been overhauled in more than 20 years. In 1986, there was the Immigration Reform and Control Act, which was primarily known for the legalization of about 3 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. The 1990 Immigration Reform and Control Act -- sorry, the 1990 Immigration Act followed four years later, which increased overall immigration levels, established a priority system of employment- and family-based immigration, and also created well known and debated programs such as the H-1B and the diversity visas.

This law, with some minor modifications along the way, is what's still in place today. What's different, however, is that the U.S. economy has changed, creating new demands for workers in industries some of which barely existed 20 years ago, while other industries have diminished.

In addition, national economies have developed abroad, and with changes to transportation and communication technology, there is now a global economy which is where the U.S. competes. On top of that, the U.S. now has twice as many immigrants -- more than 40 million today -- than we did in 1990.

So, these are some of the sources of pressure for the United States to adopt an immigration policy that's in keeping with the times and works better with our economy.

I'm going to make my awkward move over to the chair right now. Hopefully, I won't fall down.

So, to continue, our discussion today is about federal immigration reform, but today we're putting a metropolitan lens on. While Congress is debating the changes to the immigration system, cities, suburbs, and states across the country are already in the business of incorporating immigrants and their children.

We have three guests today who are going to help put this issue into perspective, who I'm going to introduce in a moment.

Immigration reform is a federal responsibility. We've seen many state and municipal actions over the last seven years that underscore the fact that localities are where the effects of immigration -- both positive and negative -- play out. The success of broad immigration reform hinges on how it's implemented at the local level, ultimately.

In some ways, since most of America's immigrants live in metropolitan areas, the debate over immigration reform should live there, too. And, in some ways, it does. Cities and metropolitan areas are, of course, very different from each other. Their industrial structures and labor markets differ. They have different housing markets. The skills compositions of workers, both native and foreign-born, are different from each other. And their responses to immigration vary considerably from cities in the Great Lakes region, who have put out the welcome mat for immigrants because they start businesses, pay taxes, create jobs, and buy homes, to states like Arizona, Alabama, and Georgia, that have taken measures to make their states the most unwelcoming by creating their own enforcement laws designed to reduce their undocumented populations.

Immigrants are not evenly spread out across the country. Neither are their costs, benefits, nor the investments made by municipal governments, non-profit organizations, and businesses. And today, our three distinguished guests, from three different places -- when it comes to immigration trends and local programs and policy around immigration and integration -- are going to talk to us today about what's happening in their cities.

To my far left is Fatima Shama, who comes from New York City, where she is the commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. She's had a number of jobs in the city government, and she brings the perspective of a proactive municipal government in a city with more immigrants than any other in the United States, where two out of every five residents is an immigrant.

She recently put out a blueprint for immigrant integration, creating a municipal integration agenda. She's a true leader among city officials, both in the United States and abroad.

Next to her is Jason Mathis, executive vice president of the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, where he leads policy initiatives for immigration and urban development. He's also the executive director of Salt Lake City's Downtown Alliance. He's one of the creators of the Utah Compact, a pragmatic statement of five principles that guides Utah's immigration discussion. We'll hear more about that this morning.

Salt Lake City is a relative newcomer when it comes to receiving immigrants. But the 125,000 immigrants that live in the metropolitan area make up about 17 percent of the population. Pretty substantial.

And to my left is Aida Cardenas. She is the executive director of Building Skills Partnership in Los Angeles, a collaboration between the janitors' union and employers that works to advance skills and opportunities of workers across California.

She's worked with low-wage workers and employers her entire career, and brings the unique perspective of understanding both sets of needs, and how building skills of workers adds values to workers, their families, and the communities that they live in.

Metropolitan Los Angeles is the second largest immigrant gateway. And there, too, about 40 percent of residents were born outside the United States.

So, these three metropolitan areas, and many others, have been focused on making sure that the children of immigrants are learning English in schools, that immigrant-owned businesses thrive, that health care systems have ways of communicating with immigrant communities, that workers have access to programs that help them build skills, and that immigrants who are ready to naturalize get the help that they need.

Our guests today have some of the most strategic and innovative practices and programs across the country.

So, as we've just heard, there are lots of possible ways that immigration reform might unfold over the coming months. We may have a comprehensive set of measures, or separate bills for discrete issues like high-skilled immigration, the Dream Act, various enforcement measures. And we've just heard from the administration about what they'd like to see happen with reform.

So, I want to start with Fatima. Which parts of immigration reform resonate with you? Can you talk about some of the efforts in your organization that align with the goals of immigration reform and immigrant integration?

MS. SHAMA: Great. So first, good morning. Thank you, Audrey. Thank you to the Brookings Institution.

I have to say I think that for us in New York, what we care most about is, in fact, the reality that comprehensive immigration reform is a must. It has to happen.

Mayor Bloomberg is someone who cares a great deal about this conversation, he's invested a lot in this conversation. He started a national coalition -- the Partnership for a New American Economy -- that brings together business leaders and mayors, really speaking to this.

For us, it is an economic argument -- the reality that 40 percent of our city, nearly 40 percent, are foreign-born. If we add their children, 60 percent of New Yorkers are either immigrants or the children of immigrants. Half of our small businesses are immigrant-owned. Nearly half of our labor market are immigrants. These are individuals who are in our school system; they're individuals who buy our homes. They make our city -- they make everything from Main Street to Wall Street prosperous in our city.

And so, for us, ensuring that any number of individuals can come out of the shadows and truly be a part of our city's economy is critically important. To recognize Dreamers, and allow these young individuals who've graduated from our high schools to realize their full potential in our city, to become professionals in our city, to add to the tax base in our city, is critically important to us. -- to become the homeowners of tomorrow.

And so, for us, immigration reform is really critical.

I think I'd have to say that the Mayor would prefer to see something that's not piecemeal. We talk a lot about the reality is we've got to fix this now. And the Senate bill provides a framework for us, certainly, in the city to be able to think about this. It challenges us to think a little bit around strategies on English language acquisition and other opportunities to get families to come out of the shadows and prepare, if you will, a portfolio that allows them to apply when immigration reform happens. But it would be critical for us.

MS. SINGER: Are there particular facets that are more important for New York City?

MS. SHAMA: Well, I mean --

MS. SINGER: -- that you see in, say, in the Senate bill?

MS. SHAMA: So, in the high school space, we in New York recognize that we are building what we hope to be competition for Silicon Valley -- I think what we're terming a "Silicon Alley." But we've got a whole new incredible tech campus that's coming. We've got a number of institutions that are -- universities that are in New York.

So, clearly, the opportunity to see any number of individuals who are in master's or Ph.D. programs become part of the infrastructure in our city, give back, become the professionals, allow us to compete globally, is critically important.

With that said, we believe in New York that you can't have, if you will, the doctor without actually having the janitor in that hospital -- right? You need both to really fundamentally make that city work, to make our city work. And so we need to recognize what it means to help these individuals come out of the shadows to be part of our low-wage -- what I think is important to recognize, the essential hands in our communities. The individuals who help build our homes, who help care for our children, who help maintain our streets and our buildings are very much a part of the fabric -- who helps us maintain the vibrancy.

We're a city that gets over 50 million tourists a year. The reality of having a diverse community be a part of our city -- without fear -- is very much who we are, and very much who we need to continue to be.

MS. SINGER: Jason or Aida, do you want to jump in and talk about what resonates with you, and what kinds of efforts align in your places?

MR. MATHIS: I'll maybe mention -- obviously, Salt Lake City is not nearly the size of New York City, in a much smaller State. But a lot of the issues are really the same. It really boils down, to me, just seeing it in very simple terms of we want to be an inclusive place, we want to be a place that welcomes people who want to contribute to our community -- whether it's high-skilled, or hourly employees.

And I think that the current system now doesn't work for anyone. For people who are concerned about amnesty, the current system is de facto amnesty in a lot of ways. And so we would, I think, just agree with everything that you said -- that the time is now to solve this problem. People from around the country, not just big metropolitan areas, but around the country, need to come forward and tell members of the House of Representatives, that now is the time -- there's a great sense of urgency -- to really claim all the things that you talked about, and all the great research the Partnership has done to document that.

I think that we stand in solidarity with everything that you said.

MS. SINGER: I mean, I imagine that, in some ways, immigration reform is something that we know is going to change life as we know it, somewhat, if we're working with immigrants, serving immigrants, in certain capacities.

But in some ways, things are going to stay pretty much the same. And I'm wondering, Aida, if you could talk about that? Do you anticipate -- or, you know, what do you see in this next move?

MS. CARDENAS: I think one of the areas that we've already been working on, and regardless of what happens, it's really critical to just integrating and, you know, building success for immigrant families, is language acquisition -- and education, right? Education is ending the cycle of poverty for children, for the immigrant children.

And the language acquisition really helps with participation, civic engagement, confidence.

And, you know, we've been able to really focus and do vocational ESL development, and partnering with dozens of employers across California who are employing, you know, janitors who are cleaning our buildings in Silicon Valley and, you know, downtown Los Angeles, all over the State, who keep our buildings safe and clean, and are, you know, embracing and enforcing our green practices, and diverting waste management. All these other issues that are really important to community, they're part of this economy.

I think one thing to understand and highlight is that immigration reform is not about what's happening to the immigrant, it's a dual integration process. It's what's happening to our communities. So if we create a path not just for legalization, but for citizenship, and incorporate workforce development, those are the keys, and those are the indicators that we see create successful communities, and what we see create adaptable communities who can really adapt to the changes, socially, financially, in our communities.

So I think it's important that we look at language acquisition, regardless of -- I know one of the possible requirements, one of the requirements right now on the table is language acquisition. So that's something we're already working on. And it is important to becoming integrated into our community.

MS. SINGER: Well, let me turn this question around a little bit.

So, it's clear that a lot of local areas have been doing a lot of work with immigrant communities, with immigrants and their children, in schools and neighborhoods, in businesses locally. In many parts of the country, this is going really

well. It's just, say in New York or Los Angeles, this is a way that these cities have built themselves, have grown, have survived economically.

In other places, there is conflict, and there are struggles.

And so I want to -- Jason sort of touched on this, but can you talk a little bit about what inaction at the federal level would mean, say, for Salt Lake City or for places that are welcoming and supporting immigrants at this point?

MR. MATHIS: Sure. So, as Cecilia indicated, there were two places in the country during the last presidential election where there was a preponderance of votes in one camp or another: Washington, D.C., obviously, was close to 70 percent for President Obama. Utah was, I think, close to the other side of the spectrum. That shouldn't come as a surprise to anybody. Utah is a very conservative state, although there are pockets of moderate and progressive people in Utah. And I would say sometimes it's difficult to be a moderate or progressive person in a conservative place like Utah.

But, for our state, you know, really what it boils down to, I think, is thinking not just about the economic impact that immigrants have -- and I think it is clear that immigrants are a net positive for high-skilled and hourly employees. They help to create more jobs for Americans, they contribute to our communities. You know, there's any number of platitudes I could say about why this matters.

But it really also has to do with the kind of country we want to live in, or the kind of community we want to live in. Do we want to be a place where people are hiding in the shadows, where people are making decisions based on fear? Or do we want to be a place that's welcoming, that's inclusive, where we're looking to contributions from across the spectrum, we're recognizing that diversity is a strength, and that the

talents and perspectives and world views that immigrants bring to our community are actually something very positive and helpful?

I think that in thinking about the history in my state over the past few years, when immigration has really been a target, and something that people have talked about a lot, we went from, I think, following sort of an Arizona-style example. A few years ago, I think that we were moving in that direction. And through work, the work of the business community, religious organizations, community leaders -- and citizens who just said that's not the right approach for our community -- we were able to dramatically change that. Utah has a driving privilege card for undocumented people. We have in-state tuition for undocumented people.

We have a community that is truly quite welcoming. And sometimes I think it doesn't have as much to do with being on the right or left side of the political spectrum. Really, immigration reform isn't about right or left politics, it's really about just doing the right thing. And I'm proud of the things that our state has done.

My big push now, I think -- and, as a community, what we're hoping for -- is that our members of the House of Representatives will find a way forward to really enact comprehensive immigration reform. That's something that is critical, not just to our little economy or to the state, but to the nation, and to moving forward in a way that really addresses our economy, and creating, again, a place that we want to live that we're proud of.

MS. SINGER: Jason, I know that you worked on the Utah Compact, and it might be worth just talking about it briefly, how that came about, and maybe mentioning the principles. I know the entire piece was less than 300 words.

MR. MATHIS: Yes.

MS. SINGER: So maybe you could describe how that came about, and what the goals of that are.

MR. MATHIS: Sure.

So, in 2010, the summer of 2010, it seemed inevitable that Utah would pass a law very similar to Arizona's. We had legislation that drafted. We had a majority of our legislature moving forward on that path. And it was really being driven, to my mind, by a very small but very vocal group of people who felt that this was a priority, and wanted to move forward on this.

But the people who really run my state, the people who really care about this state -- whether you talk to university presidents or captains of industry, community leaders, religious organizations -- were very uncomfortable with that. But it kind of seemed like this freight train that was barreling down this track, and there didn't seem to be a lot of way to divert that.

And every time someone would stand up -- and we had great profiles in courage. My boss, the president of the Chamber was opposed to this. The policy chief in Salt Lake City said, "If you pass this, I'm not going to enforce it. I think it's the wrong thing to do, to ask people to show their papers. I'm not going to do that." Our Republican attorney general said, "This is inappropriate. We're not going to be supportive of this." You had individual profiles of courage, of people standing up and saying Arizona's approach is not the right approach for our community, but they got beat down, and kind of smacked down.

And we thought that if we could have a group of people all stand up at the same time and articulate a simple values-based solution to immigration, that that would be empowering enough to change the course of the conversation.

So, over the course of several months we had probably about a hundred people all work on this document called the Utah Compact. It's 227 words, and it just highlights five principles that we felt were very critical to the immigration discussion.

And the first is that it really is a federal issue, that immigration is not an issue between Utah and other countries, it's between the federal government and other countries. We wanted to focus on the economy, recognizing the role that immigrants play as taxpayers, as consumers -- the very real and necessary role that immigrants play.

It focused on law enforcement -- that we wanted law enforcement to spend their time actually pursuing criminals, and not acting to pursue federal violations of a civil code, that that's not the role for our police officers. And, in fact, that this aggressive approach really limits police officers' ability to become part of the community, to get to know what's going on.

We care about families in Utah. And it's not just lip-service, we really care about families. So we don't want to create policies that unnecessarily separate children from their parents, or that make children afraid -- or, as was alluded to earlier, afraid to go to school for fear of what might happen.

And, finally, we care about the kind of society that we live in, that we want to live in a just and free society. And we had a wide spectrum of people from across political religious, community organizations. A very prominent conservative think-tank in Utah spoke up in favor of this.

We had a signing ceremony on the -- I think it was the anniversary of the signing of the Mayflower Compact, at the Utah state capitol building, which was similar document, where people came together and created a values-based document that talked about how they were going to govern their community.

And we had two former governors, a former U.S. Senator, a former Congress member, along with several other people, who all signed this document, and said these are the values that we are going to use to make determinations about immigration in our community.

And it was a sea change. It really changed the tone, it changed the discussion, and helped our state to become a little bit more thoughtful and compassionate and civil in the conversation about immigration. Now I think our hope is that the federal government will approach something similar to that, and they'll maybe use that as a template for their plans.

MS. SINGER: Thanks.

Fatima and Aida, you're from two of the biggest -- you are from the biggest immigrant -- is whether we measure it by cities or by metropolitan areas which includes the suburbs.

And you guys, personally, but your cities historically, have really been instrumental, both in terms of city government, but also non-profits and community-based organizations, faith-based organizations in those places, in bringing in, receiving immigrants, and providing the kinds of services that help them make it and move up.

And so is there anything that you want to say about what inaction, federal inaction, might mean? Would it actually change much on the ground for either of you?

MS. SHAMA: So, I mean, I have to say that we in New York recognize that immigration is a federal issue, but immigrants are a local issue, they're our responsibility. They are our human capital. They are very much, for New York in particular, they are our past, they are our present, and they are our future.

And so, federal inaction is a problem. But we do all that we can, as innovatively as we can, to ensure that what we create in New York is a place where individuals who choose New York as their home are welcomed, are able to enroll their children in our schools without concern, without fear. We do all that we can to ensure that if someone wants to start a small business and be part of our community, that there are methods and opportunities for them to engage.

We care a lot of ensuring that city government does its fair share of going out and reintroducing government to our immigrant communities, ensuring that they understand that we are here to serve them and to provide services to them. Our police department, I think, does a really great job working with our communities, really understanding that they need to understand the needs of the communities, work with the communities. We've had graduating classes of our police department that represent, you know, individuals from over 50 different countries, the languages spoken in our police department. So there's a real, there's a real fabric of who we are.

The truth is that we have any number of young people who are in our schools, who have graduate from our high schools that have any number of dreams. And they are American in every way but in a document. And so inaction is a problem, because these young people absolutely want to be a part of our city. We want them to be a part of our city. They can be our teachers, they can be our doctors, they could be the next mayors of our city. And so there needs to be something there.

I would say we lose a tremendous amount of human capital, and brilliance of individuals who come to New York and are creating patents, in our graduate institutions, are creating any number of -- want to be a part of what is the American Dream in our city. And so we lose that.

And then I would say that there are -- we recently did a financial services study of our immigrants of three immigrant communities -- of the Mexican community, the Ecuadorian community and the Chinese community, really focused on the Fujianese community which is one of our fastest growing newer communities. All three of these communities, whether they were banked or un-banked, overwhelmingly can articulate to us that they were all interested in investing in their children's education and in home ownership. Every single one of them. They all save at different points, they all have bank accounts at different points, but every single one of them have absolute investment in recreating their success by these very markers that make our city successful -- right? -- educational outcomes and home ownership, and owning a business -- right?

And so inaction impacts us. But without it, we are going to do all that we can to help these communities thrive.

MS. CARDENAS: Yes, I would just add that, you know, something that we've been working on in Los Angeles is the Council of Immigrant Integration. And it's a group coming together of community-based organizations, the L.A. Chamber of Commerce, labor, the sheriff's department, the mayor's office, to come together and have these discussions: What are our principles, in terms of immigrant immigration? And what are our principles around comprehensive immigration reform?

And I also agree that it is important to have comprehensive immigration reform, because it is bringing the workers out of the shadows. And in Los Angeles, 14 percent of undocumented workers are business owners. So it's really bringing those economies, you know, to the surface, and really doing integration work.

And I think that in times when there's the most conflict is when we most need to, you know, come together and figure out what are our cities' needs. And it's going to differ. It might differ in L.A. than it will in Silicon Valley than it will in Salt Lake

City and New York. And those are the conversations that leaders -- leaders -- need to step up and have, and have those difficult discussions, and be able to understand where is it that we have a common ground.

If it's 100 words, if it's 200 words, if it's 500 words -- let's start there, and that alone can really start, you know, being that path and that guide.

So, I think that, for us, the work that we started doing in terms of this Council is really helping set the frame, and really building, also, collaborations to do, you know, services or education or information for not just the immigrants in our city, but also everybody in our city about immigrant integration.

MS. SINGER: Well, I think this is -- all of you made really important points, and I just want to highlight the distinction that Fatima made that immigration really is a federal concern, but immigrants live in places. They are people that live in places. And institutions that are in those places are affected by immigrants and immigration policy.

So, I want to ask now what kinds of services are you already providing that might be helpful, or be extended, or prepares you for the implementation of some kind of immigration reform -- whether it's around legalization of some or all of the undocumented population, widespread E-Verify system for employment verification of immigrants, or temporary work visas that would bring different kinds of workers in and out of your cities?

And what kinds of challenges do you see ahead in scaling up, if some of these -- I mean, you can choose to talk about anything that connects.

And we can start with you.

MS. CARDENAS: So, some of the work that we've been doing in the last eight years or so, with Building Skills Partnership, as I mentioned earlier, is our vocational

ESL program. And we do this in partnership with employers. And our curriculum is really based on the needs in terms of providing better customer service, the changing of the green economy, and the work of the maintenance worker and the janitorial workforce, and what's needed, or moving to day cleaning and the different language acquisition skills needed there.

So we've been working on this win-win partnership. And, you know, talk about bringing different points of view together, it's a labor-management partnership, so these are folks who are often at opposite sides of the table, with competing and conflicting interests, in terms of, you know, a bottom line, who can set all that aside and say, "What are the things that our industry needs, together, both as labor and management?"

So, together with the workers, with the union, SEIU United Service Workers West, and with over 40 janitorial companies, from small family companies to the largest national and international janitorial companies, to be able to sit down together and say, "What is the type of program that's needed to do workforce development that's going to be an added value to my company?" -- but it's also an added value to the quality of life of those workers who are being invested in -- and that, alone, building that confidence, and knowing that my employer and my industry is investing in me.

We've also brought in the client companies who contract these companies. So a lot of you high-tech, bio-tech companies, and the largest commercial real estate owners, who are also at the table and are saying, "This is what I want to see in my building," or "I have a janitor who cleans my office who's been cleaning my office for the last 20 years. What's the investment I'm making in that person who's bringing that quality of service to my building and to my wellness, and to my health -- and to my

bottom-line in a building, in terms of being productive?" So being able to bring that together.

But we also provide computer literacy skills. We also provide citizenship classes, and wellness and health education. And we do a lot of the training, and the partnerships are at work sites. So you'll have a building that has 7 janitors in one building, 40 in another, 200 in another, depending on the site. So workers are spread out everywhere.

So we work out of the union offices as training centers, kind of our hubs, but we go out and work with, you know, to train the workers and work with a variety of employers. So we're set up to be able to have that access, and we have that relationship, to reach some of the hardest-to-reach folks. I mean, these are folks who, you know, are immigrants, and they have language barriers. But they're also working late at night. While most of us are asleep, they're cleaning our offices, keeping our area safe and clean. And they're the hardest to reach.

And with the cuts that are happening, particularly in California -- I'm not as familiar with other areas -- with adult education and other programs, I mean it's just nonexistent. Like this -- these opportunities wouldn't exist for workers, for this group of workers and these families, if we weren't reaching them. And we're able to reach, you know, over 2,000 workers throughout the state every year who are part of our programs.

And I think that that's where we're already set up, in terms of if/when immigration reform happens, or just additional investment in the workforce, what that means, as these workers can move up into being higher level property service workers, and it creates opportunities -- these are union jobs with, you know, living wages, and some form of stability, and access to health care. And that's really critical, really important for the workforce that's going to be coming out of the shadows.

MS. SINGER: I guess I'll add to that thought -- "What kinds of services are you providing that directly relate to reform?" -- what are you anticipating, in terms of scaling up, or investing in the core services that you're already doing? What's the impact, looking ahead -- I'm thinking of Fatima, here -- on budgets and the like?

MS. SHAMA: So, I would say that deferred action for childhood arrivals was a really good test-case for us, and for, hopefully, many other cities and localities around the country. In New York we estimated that we had approximately 80,000 young individuals who would be eligible for deferred action.

And the city of New York made a very conscious decision that we would create a partnership within our city agencies -- an interagency task force, if you will -- to figure out what documents would any child need so that the child could simply -- you could put out a message if you need your school records, if you need immunization records, if you were part of an after-school program, if you perhaps got married and you needed a marriage license. So we put a process in place.

I will tell you, we're very happy. All of my colleagues were wonderful champions about this. We all did it really well. In fact, several cities around the country said can we borrow your model? We said, happy to share it with you. I will tell you, though, that we learned a lot from that experience, which namely was we only saw -- in the state of New York, where we estimate about 108,000. We can't get it down to the city level because the data that we get from the USCIS -- but about 26 percent of the eligible population has applied.

And so there's a whole reality of kids who aren't applying for deferred action -- right? – essentially, Dreamers, who would get temporary relief of deportation, and work authorization -- work authorization being a big one. We narrowed down the data set to figure out what's going on. We realized there was a number of individuals in

that pool that were disconnected. They might have dropped out from school. They might have -- were on the pathway to a GED but disconnected for some reason or another. So, perhaps they started an English language class but had to disconnect.

For us, this was an area of concern. We estimate about 16,000 people fit into that category. Again, this is work authorization for these young individuals. Bringing them out of the shadows is quite critical. There's an economic argument there.

So, last week -- Wednesday, I want to say -- Wednesday, we were able to announce in New York City that $18 million was being invested specifically for the population of young people eligible for deferred action, and that we were going to try our best to reach out deeper, to provide additional English language classes, provide additional pathways to the GED, and sort of enrollment in the GED program -- perhaps you can get into a certificate program -- and legal services. So, first time, actually, in any city across the country, a concentrated amount of money being put into a focused audience like this that's undocumented -- right?

The truth is that we need about six times that amount of money to do what really needs to happen, for not just this audience, but our undocumented population. English language acquisition is going to be a really big one.

I want to talk about the legalization process. Legal services will be one of the greatest challenges we will witness with this reality. We in the city of New York are very fortunate to have eight law schools, a tremendous number of law firms. We've got a non-profit community, a community-based network that has robust legal services. So we've got quite a number of legal minds, if you will, in the city of New York.

The reality is, we have one immigration attorney for every 10,000 New Yorkers. What that will mean for legalization will be incredibly important. Any number of us know the realities of immigration fraud, and the number of individuals who hang

shingles freely to say, "I'm here to help you. Pay me x-amount of money." We see this now, when there isn't even comprehensive immigration reform, and we have individuals putting out messages that "We can help you" -- right? We've had to put out counter-messages saying: There is nothing out there. Do not pay anyone a penny.

So we actually started a program in a pilot two years ago, robust way this year, with law students, where we actually engaged law students and trained them in a curriculum to go into high schools and talk to immigrant youth in high schools, English language learners in particular. It's a pipeline process, we think. We think we're embedding in law students a base of information that we can, hopefully, engage them thinking about maybe becoming an immigration attorney. But when, hopefully, the process happens, they might be lawyers; we can call on them to come back, and to go through some sort of additional training to become lawyers in this space, to help us around legalization.

It also gets in front of high school students, talking about their rights, but their responsibilities. An undocumented youth gets stopped by a police officer, decides they want to mouth off, that could easily result in a young person being arrested, therefore questioning their good moral character. And so, for us, it's been, really, a preventative strategy on the young person, but a recruitment strategy on the law students, on the legal minds.

We also do a similar program around citizenship, really focusing on the pro bono attorneys, sort of attorneys in the private space, engage them in working with us to help naturalize New Yorkers. We have a big number of New Yorkers we can naturalize.

Financial empowerment has been a big one for us. We really want any number of our families to connect to banks, and to start bank accounts. We've started a

number of relationships with banks to recognize that consular IDs are a form of -- can be a secondary form -- of ID to open a bank account. We hope to get --

SPEAKER: [Inaudible] -- driver's license.

MS. CARDENAS: The City of New York doesn't -- it's a state-issued ID, so it's not something we work on. This is the city of New York, not the state of New York.

So we also care a lot about English language programs, and so we've created a tool that could be used by volunteers to work on conversational English skills in communities -- so, in libraries, in houses of worship. We're now going to be working with the largest volunteer service, New York Cares, to start training volunteers to help run conversational English classes -- again, in response to what will be the reality for comprehensive immigration reform.

And we've done a great amount of work on civic leadership, really engaging individuals in our communities around being trained around leadership. We think they're our ambassadors. And so we've graduated, if you will, over 200 of these individuals, multilingual, from across the communities. We really think these folks are going to be our ambassadors when we need to get messages out there. Ethnic press matters, but so does a local voice.

But, to your point of the challenge, how do we scale this up? -- to say we're trying all that we can, using human capital and neighbors -- right? -- using New Yorkers to help us do this in a volunteer and a service space. But money matters. And we're going to have to be very creative with money. We're going to really lean on both our tax-levy dollars, but also philanthropic dollars. And we're going to have to argue for some money from the federal space.

MS. SINGER: Well, if New York needs more money, then I don't know what other places are going to do. (Laughter)

But, Jason, maybe if you want to add something?

MR. MATHIS: Well, I wanted to address one of the issues that you brought up that my two distinguished panelists didn't mention, which is e-verify.

So Utah right now has an E-Verify law, but there's no penalty if you don't do it. And for the past couple of legislative sessions, there's been a push from some legislators to create a penalty, so that if you're found to have hired someone who's here without papers, you'd actually lose your business license.

And in our organization, we said that's really inappropriate. That's not a fair solution, and it doesn't really do anything to address the problem.

One of the things that really argues for a comprehensive solution is E-Verify. What we have said is that we're not opposed to an e-verify system that has some teeth, but it has to be a national system, where every state has the same system, where our state is not disadvantaged. It has to also, though -- and this is really a critical point -- it has to come along with visa reform, so that employers can have the workers that they need. It has to come along with recognizing a legal status for people who are here, existing, currently. That you can't just cherry-pick one aspect of immigration reform and say, well, we're just going to do e-verify, we're just going to do enforcement, we're just going to do visa reform. We're going to do --

Any number of these things don't work in isolation. It's a complicated problem, but the answer really has to be a simple one, which is you've got to do everything at once, because none of these things will work on their own. They're all related to another.

So, I would say it's not just that comprehensive reform is important, comprehensive reform is essential.

And I think, representing just the business community of Utah, we're tired of waiting. We have waited way too long. The time for reform is now, and we need to make sure that our representatives understand that.

My organization has taken out multiple full-page ads in the two local dailies in Salt Lake City encouraging that. We've held multiple press conferences from business leaders around the state, saying this is important -- not just important, essential. There are lots of things we could do to improve our economy. We could do infrastructure improvement, we could reform the tax code -- all kinds of different things we could do to improve the national economy. Some of those take money. Some of those take resources.

Immigration reform is something we can do that will require a little bit of money as we're integrating people into the community, but it's a decision that we can make right now that will have enormous positive economic benefits for the entire country. And there, frankly, is no excuse not to move forward on this. The time is right, and the time is now, to enact comprehensive immigration reform.

MS. SINGER: So, before we take audience questions in just a few minutes, I want to give each of you a minute, starting on this end, to say what's the one or two things that you're doing that you think other organizations could learn from the way you're doing it, or that the federal government could learn from.

MS. SHAMA: I think what's worked for us, and for a longer period of time than we thought, is collaboration, and to collaborate with folks who may not be your more traditional partner. I mean, I think that through collaboration, I think it's surprising how much farther and faster we can get things done.

And being clear, and setting principles and guidelines on the front end, I think that's helped us a lot, in terms of our, you know, the work that we've done within our

industry and in our organization, to the point where it gets everybody to trust each other, to work together, that we understand that we can respect each other's point of view, but we still have one mission in mind. And sometimes we have a different strategy of getting there, but those we can work out, and those we discuss and we try out. And those strategies might change, but our mission is not.

And so think, just in terms of building our organization and being able to grow so fast, and build our capacity, those are the elements that come to mind when you ask that, in terms of the work that we're doing within the city, and the Council of Immigrant Integration. I think it's the same thing of being patient with ourselves, and really taking those small but solid steps forward -- and really, the collaboration piece.

MS. SINGER: Well, I hope Congress hears this, because I think that is a really important issue.

MR. MATHIS: I would just build on that, and talk about the issue of trust -- that, really, it's about trusting people.

I really do think that there is a well of goodness and decency and compassion in this country that we have to rely on and we have to go back to. And I don't care what political persuasion you have, what your feelings are, Americans are really good people, deep down. And we need to go back to that and trust each other, and trust ourselves, to do the right thing.

And I think that that aspect of trust is so critical to collaboration, but that's really something that I think we work to build in our organization, and throughout our community, is a sense of trust -- that you can trust other people, and that ultimately, as you said, it's about getting to that larger goal of what is going to be the best community, the best society for us to live in.

But trust is really an integral part of that. Without trust, nothing gets done. With trust, you can accomplish anything. But trust is really critical.

MS. SHAMA: So, I actually want to say that I think what we've learned in New York is that our city has absolutely realized its economic reality, because we invest in our communities. And we fundamentally believe that when you invest in communities, they invest back in you.

And I think that we've been able to work with -- we are now working with cities across the country to help them realize that they don't have to wait for immigration reform, that they can actually do a tremendous number of things right now with their immigrant communities, recognizing the true breadth of the assets of their communities -- and the needs -- and sort of recognizing what they already do for every resident in their city, and how do they need to really respond to the needs of those communities that can bring so much capital. And so -- Audrey mentioned this -- we created, essentially, a toolkit, a blueprint for immigrant integration, really a sort of how-to guide, how cities across the country can sort of borrow this.

The one thing that I think is really important out of this work is that when cities start to engage in this, we will be able to collectively say: This is what we have been able to benefit -- right? These are the benefits our cities have realized. And federal government, as a collective, we can say to them, or to it: You cannot ignore the reality that in our localities we have the opportunity, the responsibility, and we've been able to do this for our communities. Economically, we've thrived.

And so I'd actually love to see a way to pipeline money to help support some of the innovations that happen in cities -- because that's where communities live, and that's where opportunities matter. And though the money will go to the states, I don't know, in many ways, how it's going to pipeline into municipalities, into suburbs, where

many -- into metropolitan areas -- where many communities are living, and are staking their claim as their home.

So, for me, I think our space now has moved into really helping the work that we've learned in New York, and we've been able to do in New York, blossom in other parts of this country. Because, I agree, the time is now.

MS. SINGER: So, I think those were three really important and clear messages: collaboration, trust, and investment. And it really should drive the discussion and the legislation forward if we listen to local areas where immigrants live and work.

Okay, we're going to start with questions.

There are some microphones in the room. And when you get the mic -- right here -- please say your name and your affiliation first.

MS. PLAZA: I'm Sonia Plaza, from the World Bank. I'm working on this new initiative, the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development, KNOMAD. And we are planning to organize for the high-level dialogue. [Inaudible], and even similar to the ones that we are having here. So I will touch base with you later.

But I have two comments and a question.

Now, you were talking about the community development banks, and you were talking about how -- I did a survey also, immigrants, in different parts, and they were doing the same investing in houses, and investing in some firms, and having some savings. The only problem is that the banks that they approach more are the community local banks. They don't go to the other banks.

Now, there has been a new legislation by the United States, and also now in the U.K., where the community development banks, even the ones that were working the migrants, closed the accounts of the money transfer companies -- especially for the Somalis. So, now they have stopped them to send remittances because, according to them, money laundering and counterfeiting problems, terrorism, has been an issue.

I would like to see your views on that, and how community development banks in New York are dealing with this, or how they're approached. That's one. The second one, in terms of the diaspora, for example, here in Peru, and we saw in other countries, the diaspora helped also them to provide some legal services. So they have community groups on the Peruvian diaspora here, or in the UAE also, where they provide these legal services.

So maybe you can approach some of that diaspora, the Somalis, the (inaudible), but can also give the legal services.

MS. SINGER: Okay, hold onto that thought. We're going to take another question.

Right there -- with the Redskins hat.

MR. McCABE: So my name is Harrison McCabe. I'm with the DHS. And you guys have been talking about -- your cities seem pretty stable economically, and I see how immigration reform would benefit your cities.

But when we talk about a city like Detroit that just tried to file for bankruptcy, how is this going to give them a spark so they can become the city that it once was?

MS. SINGER: Okay -- and we'll take one more question for now.

Right there, in the back.

SPEAKER: Hey, Audrey.

MS. SINGER: Hi, Ellen.

SPEAKER: My question was for Ms. Shama. And I was really interested in what she said about interagency cooperation in New York. And it seems that there would be challenges in upscaling that to a federal level.

So I was just interested in what she might have thought the challenges had been in New York, and how such cooperation could translate on the federal level.

MS. SINGER: Okay. So we've got banking stuff from Sonia. We've got the Detroit question. And upscaling question.

I guess we should start with you, Fatima. But everybody else can talk.

MS. SHAMA: Yes, yes, yes.

So, on the community development financial institutions -- so, in New York, I would say that our local credit union community has been incredibly, incredibly

responsive. I have to also admit that many of our big banks have, too. And it's really based on the local sort of -- at the branch level.

And so, in some ways, it's a lot of hand-holding, but we have a robust financial empowerment network that works with the community development financial institutions, as well as local branches.

There are challenges, when you sort of look up the line. I will say that what we also learned in this study was that individuals feel much more comfortable doing remittances through the traditional way, and not through these financial institutions. They prefer to go the route of Western Union, versus allow that money -- but I think it's a learning process. I think we've learned a lot in that initial space.

The second question, around diaspora -- so, the truth is that in New York, we celebrate where people are from, and where they are today. And so everyone in New York is very comfortably identifying themselves a hyphenated-American. We have any number of different, you know, bar associations that are ethnically affiliated -- whether it's the Dominican Bar Association, or the Latino Bar Association, or the Muslim, you know, Bar Association, or the Asian-American, or South Asian -- I mean, it can go on.

And, so, when the time in right, we will activate all of them to be critically important to us. So -- but thank you.

I want to just answer the question on interagency -- which is, I think leadership matters -- right? So when the mayor makes a statement like, "My expectation is that you're all going to do this," and I quickly follow up and say, "I'm following up on the mayor's mandate on this. You know, we've been charged to lead this..." -- very few of my colleagues will push back, because it is an articulated decision from the mayor.

And I have to tell you that -- I think you said this -- but there are lots of good people -- lots and lots and lots of good people -- not just in the city of New York, who work in government, but across this country. And I think the reality is that this is the time for us to come forward, and this is the time for us to think how do we work together?

I will say that in the absence of having, you know, a point person in the federal government whose job it is to coordinate all this kind of stuff, I think you might have a challenge with who has ownership over that role. In the city of New York, we have a person whose job it is to think about -- you know, literally, the definition of my job is ensuring the well-being of immigrant New Yorkers and their integration. And so we're able to work that way.

Are there challenges? Absolutely. Have we overcome them? Yes. And there's always a chance to overcome them.

I'll give someone a chance about Detroit.

MR. MATHIS: Well, I'll mention Detroit -- and I don't know a ton about Detroit's economy, other than, you know, what you might read in the national press.

And I would say that comprehensive immigration reform isn't the only thing that is going to help Detroit come back to be the great city that it was, but it's one of the things that will help to make that happen. Anytime you've got a group of people living in the shadows, afraid to access law enforcement, who may be not able to pay taxes, or not contributing, who may be not getting the education they need, not having English is a first -- you know, to learn English -- that's a problem. That creates this sort of subset of people living in the shadows. And that will drag down any community, to have these two different groups of people.

So that's just -- immigration reform, comprehensive national immigration reform, isn't the only thing that will help Detroit, but is one of the things that will help Detroit. And every city, no matter where your local economy is, this is something that will help everyone.

MS. SHAMA: Let me just add on to the Detroit thing, if I may.

So, Detroit has a lot of immigrants. It has a real -- metropolitan Detroit, I should say. I mean -- yes, metropolitan Detroit. Most are living outside the city, but there are a fair amount in the city. It has a long history of immigration. It was one of the big gateways in the early part of the 20th century. So the legacy and the culture of immigration there -- although the groups have changed over time -- is strong.

And the immigrants that are there are strongly participating in the economy at all different levels. In fact, it tilts towards the higher end of the scale, because immigrants have been there longer, and have found ways to stay in those kinds of occupations and industries.

There's also an initiative called Global Detroit, and it's affiliated with Global Michigan. Its main mission is to attract and retain and support immigrants, and it has a number of different strategies within that. And it's something that's become an important part of initiatives all throughout the Great Lakes, to develop these kinds of programs, because of the energy and the investment that immigrants bring to these places.

MS. CARDENAS: I just want to add that there's this really study that the Center for Study of Immigrant Integration has done out of USC, that really did this real detailed work around these indicators and scorecards of immigrant integration. And it uses indicators: civic participation -- so the trajectory into becoming, you know, citizens,

and the naturalization process -- the economic status of the immigrants, the trajectory of their economic status and how welcoming the community was to immigrants. And the higher the score of these communities, the better they could adapt to the changes that needed to happen.

So a lot of times in our cities, our economies change, so the whole community needs to adapt and change because of the economy or other situations -- that cities who had higher scores for being able to integrate immigrants into their communities were more successful in making these changes.

Now, it doesn't mean that just that, alone -- I think that just shows the type of environment, overall, that it was probably more collaborative, there was more trust, there was more investment overall. But I think those are very important indicators that study has shown, of being able to adapt and change.

And that's why I think -- earlier, we were talking about, you know, it's not just about the federal law and the reform, it's what are we doing with it, how are we doing the integration? How are we doing workforce development? And how are we making sure there's a path to citizenship? Because even as citizens, naturalized citizens are actually more likely to buy a home than native-born Americans. So that is a huge indicator, again, of what that can mean to the economy and the stabilizing.

And so it is investing in those, in workers -- and not just immigrant workers, in all workers -- and really integrating it into all of our workforce strategies.

MS. SINGER: We have time for a few questions -- two more questions.

One here, and I guess we should go way to the back, next.

MR. GUGGENHEIM: Hi, I'm Joe Guggenheim, retired, formerly an economist, worked on urban policy.

I wanted to raise a question and focus on the issue of increased immigration, new immigration, into this country, given the fact that we have a declining labor force related to the total population.

And also, it seems to me -- and I wonder if Brookings has done any studies to show that those cities and metropolitan areas which have the highest rates of growth in immigration, have had the highest rates of economic growth? Because in addition to immigrants adding to the supply of labor, they also get involved in demand -- they're buying houses, and furniture, and services. So I think you can show that. And I wonder if Brookings has done anything in that line.

And then the question of cities like Detroit, if that's the case, shouldn't we be trying to get incentives for new immigrations to move into the cities like Detroit, which have suffered in population growth? And what kind of policies can we adopt at the federal, or even local, level to stimulate more integration into those places that are losing population?

MS. SINGER: Okay.

And then we'll take the one in the back.

MS. MORIGANTI: Hi. My name is Poini Moriganti. I'm a medical student with the American Medical Association. My question is twofold.

First, in this changing health care environment, where we are trying to focus more on moving individuals who live in the United States towards more primary care-based health system, what is the future of health care for individuals that fall under the population of immigrant status? Because the assumption, or the kind of general understanding, is that a lot of times these individuals tend to be consumers of the emergency room system, which is what we're trying, as a nation, to move away from.

So what's the future of health care for immigration populations in the United States?

And the second part of my question is, as a population in general, what is the health issue that is of greatest importance, or most relevant to the population in general?

Thanks.

MS. SINGER: Thank you.

Okay, we don't have too much time. I'll start with Joe's questions. Yes, the demography of the United States is such that we're looking at an aging population. Over the next couple of decades we're going to become very old. We need younger people coming in to take over, to build our labor force, and to build it well for this globalized economy.

So immigration seems to be one of the main focuses -- it should be the main focus that we have for strengthening and maintaining and growing our labor force, so that we can support ourselves going forward.

On the impact of immigration and immigrant growth and economic growth, we have a number of studies that touch on that, including one looking at the geography of immigrant skills across metropolitan areas, and a number of other things. Other organizations have done very specific metropolitan work. I'm thinking here of the New York Fiscal Policy Institute, that looked at immigration and economic affects across 30 metropolitan areas.

But I'm going to turn the rest over to my fellow panelists here, if you want to talk about health care, labor force.

MS. SHAMA: I actually just want to pick up on the point of incentives, and what that could mean for Detroit.

We, in New York, have seen very directly, in areas that have had some blight, the incentivizing of putting, connecting real, sort of, landlords to immigrant entrepreneurs, and sort of figuring out some sort of, you know, two months of their rent waived so that they can open up a business. The absolute reality is this change in neighborhood, and economic outcome of that neighborhood, becoming, quite honestly, a corridor.

I will say that I was in Minneapolis last week, and Minneapolis tells a very similar story, with the Mexican community in Minneapolis, and the African community -- the Somali community, in particular -- very much aligned around neighborhoods that experienced a lot of blight, high crime, they were sort of gang infested. The city negotiated the ability to give them a building, give the sort of American Economic Development Corporation a building. They transformed it into a central market with immigrant entrepreneurs -- I mean, just brilliant work.

And so, there really is an opportunity, I think, for Detroit to think about that.

So, on the question of health care -- I think the reality of what is going to be the realization for immigrants is quite real. I think the space largely becomes for individuals who are legal permanent residents and for undocumented.

In a place like New York, we have a very large public health system, hospital system that is fantastic. But they already work tirelessly to make sure that we make ends meet. They're going to be doing that, and so much more, because many of

our communities do use the health care system in a way where we do need to regulate primary care as a -- not the emergency room, but primary care.

We are actually changing a number of our health care facilities to become federally-qualified health centers which would be community-based health centers, which we think will change the practice. But there's a real gap there that I think is not being discussed enough. So thanks for raising that.

And just to "What is the greatest health care challenge?" -- I will say -- and my mayor has a very large voice on this, and cares a lot about this reality -- but obesity is a huge issue in America, and will continue to be. Lack of movement, and greater engagement in poor eating habits -- many people know us to care a lot about the size of the soda you drink. But the truth is that sugars and lack of movement and poor eating habits are resulting in tremendous realities of obesity that lead to diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and so on.

MS. SINGER: All right, we're officially out of time, but I would like you both to just, if you have something to wrap up with.

MR. MATHIS: I would just point out that I think these questions are actually related in some ways -- that, typically, immigrants are often younger, healthier, and less fat than many Americans.

And, you know, there is a preponderance of people not to have a primary care physician, not to know where to go for health care until it becomes an emergency. A lot of that really is education, and making sure people understand that there's an inexpensive, better way to get health care, and to get ahead of problems like diabetes or heart disease, or other issues like that. That's not something that's unique to the immigrant population. That's something that all Americans could benefit from. But

probably there's some additional education that might have to go into making sure immigrant populations understand that.

MS. CARDENAS: Just one thing I would add is that the Santa Clara County had the highest scorecard for immigrant integration in all of California, and it's due to Silicon Valley. And we've had a lot of, we have a lot of recent immigrants, but you also have, you know, an investment, and you have higher skilled immigrants.

But, with that, as Fatima mentioned earlier, comes all the service workers behind that, who are also immigrants. And we actually have this program at the high-tech, bio-tech companies out there, where we do the vocational ESL for the janitors. And we actually have a tutoring system set up with employees. So, often you have, maybe, a higher-skilled immigrant who's tutoring and working with the janitor, and their immigrant experience is just so different. And the realities are just so different. But being able to work together and teach each other about their experiences, and also addressing, you know, language skills, and practicing, but at the same time becoming part of this community, you know we have this at sites like, you know, at Google, and Cisco, and Stanford and UC-Berkeley.

And so you have folks really coming together and learning about each other, and, again, integrating into the workplace, and becoming part of these, you know, exciting, you know, Silicon Valley, high-tech, you know, Googlers -- right? And so they get to be a part of that community, and they're coming out of those shadows.

And that's a great example. They have the highest scorecard of, you know, immigrant integration, and they -- you know, they have a lot of recent immigrants. It's just quite diverse.

MS. SINGER: Thank you.

I want to thank our three terrific panelists for a great discussion. They left us with these three important concepts -- and this was totally unplanned, which I think is a great thing. They didn't talk to each other, I didn't talk to them about it -- collaboration, trust, investment. These are the things that are important when we think about immigrants and immigration policy going forward.

So, thank you all for being with us. (Applause)

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